

Superfund Records Center
SITE: Olin Chemical
BREAK: 2-1
OTHER: 484719

EPA Official Record

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From:

To: Jim Dilorenzo/R1/USEPA/US@EPA

Delivered Date: 02/27/2009 09:45 AM EDT

Subject: RE: water test

Hello Jim.

Thanks so much for the detailed answer to my questions. Additionally I appreciate the heads up regarding MTBE levels.

Does it make sense to conduct testing at more residential sites, more frequently, for MTBE? If so, I volunteer my site. Although this may appear to be self-serving, which it actually is, I believe that stepped up monitoring would make sense. Certainly residents need to have reasonably contemporaneous information concerning these levels. Also, if the levels continue to grow, remediation would be more effective and more healthy if done sooner rather than later. We would need to know when to stop using the water for consumption and, of course, would look for a solution.

Thanks again. I am one of those who will read the technical stuff!

-----Original Message-----

From: dilorenzo.jim@epamail.epa.gov [mailto:dilorenzo.jim@epamail.epa.gov]
Sent: Thursday, February 26, 2009 6:11 PM
To:
Subject: Re: water test

Hi

I reviewed a copy of the data package regarding your well test, which Olin sent me. Their lab did in fact analyze your well for a long list of chemicals, including MTBE and chromium. What you see on the summary table that Olin sent you are chemical groups listed by common analytical method, including "Volatiles," "Semi-Volatiles," "Metals" and "Anions." Under each of these groups, Olin only reported the chemicals that were detected. N-Nitrosodimethylamine and Ammonia appear to be singled out on this summary table because these two chemicals each require their own special analytical method. In all, over 80 chemicals were tested.

I assume by your questions that Olin mailed you the summary letters and table, and not the actual laboratory report. This is not unusual as EPA typically does not mail laboratory reports to homeowners as a matter of routine because



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these reports are often confusing with many codes and acronyms. However, since you asked, please find attached below a complete copy of what Olin sent me. This includes the summary letters and table, and the relevant portions of the laboratory report. Again, you'll see a lot of codes, acronyms and even scribbling, but the full list of chemicals sampled is apparent and runs several pages long as you remember. I hope this addresses your primary concern regarding the extent of sampling.

With regard to your question about peer sampling, I did have an EPA field person visit the area to collect our own samples from 5 randomly selected homes. The objective of this effort was to collect samples from a sub-set of the homes to verify the accuracy of Olin's analytical data. To be truly comparable, EPA's samples were collected along side Olin's samples, to rule out any possible discrepancies which could later be attributable to differences in sampling method. We call this process "split sampling." EPA collected split samples on October 7th from

These 5 samples were analyzed at an independent lab for the same chemicals analyzed by Olin. Our lab results were very similar to Olin's. Based on this good data correlation, I believe the results for your, and the other wells where we were not able to collect splits, are accurate.

I do want to bring to your attention that the well water from . did test positive for N-Nitrosodimethylamine (NDMA) at 9.4 ppt (part per trillion). This is a very low level. For comparison, the concentration of NDMA detected in the town well back in 2003 was 168 ppt. The 9.4 ppt is low enough that EPA can not recommend discontinued or restricted use of their well, however, it is a major concern to me that NDMA has been detected in your neighborhood for the first time.

NDMA was not detected at ., or any other private well, when sampled back in 2003. NDMA is an extremely mobile chemical; so I am concerned that it may be a precursor to other plume chemicals. As such, I have directed Olin to resample this well, and with the owner's permission, EPA plans to collect a split sample at that time. Results from . are pending from Olin's laboratory (they were sampled more recently than the others in January).

Please let me know if this summary and the attached information do not adequately address your concerns.

Thank you for your continued cooperation in allowing access to your well for sampling.

Jim

(See attached file: olin_result_ .pdf)

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To
02/23/2009 11:59 AM Jim Dilorenzo/R1/USEPA/US@EPA .cc

Subject
water test

Hello Jim.

I recently signed for a certified mail copy of the water test on my well at , Wilmington performed on behalf of Olin by MACTEC. The report indicated potable water. It did list a calcium value of 62 for which no standards exist.

Query: Will my water be peer tested and, if so, when?

Reason: As I have said, testing of my water back in the late 80's -early 90's. or thereabouts, revealed dangerous quantities of heavy metals and VOC's. I wasn't aware that any remediation had been done. Thus, I wonder where the heavy metals and VOC's have gone?

Based on Olin's less than credible track record, how can I know that my water is safe to drink? If remediation was done, how so and when? If not, where did the offending compounds go? As I recall in addition to VOC's, there was in issue of MTBE and, as earlier stated, heavy metals of which I am reasonably certain chromium was among the offenders. Since there is allegedly a "plume" sitting below and near my home, such "plume" was, as I understood it , sitting on a top of bow-shaped bedrock, where did it go? The plume contained a witch's brew of dangerous chemicals.

It appears that only a limited number of chemicals are now on the list to be tested by MACTEC , seven to be precise. What has happened to the old testing schedule which was long enough to go to a second page? What has happened to these other chemicals formerly subject to testing? Did they all go away? And, if so, how so, particularly where I believe the limit of relevant activity at OLIN has been in the areas of containment and identification? That is, no remediation to date.

It may well be true that the present reporting schedule has been done accurately. However, that is moot with regard to what I believed was a long list of offensive chemicals that appear to be not subject to testing at all. If I am correct, the present results are disingenuous, misleading, and

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inconsistent with regard to the stated objectives of analysis and monitoring with a goal of remediation to a level where the water is truly safe to consume.

The present testing regimen appears to willfully omit quite a few chemicals that were once present. Absent a credible explanation for why such chemicals are no longer subject to analysis, I am lead to believe that the list has been fraudulently truncated.

If I am correct, well users affected by the OLIN situation need to be provided with drinking water. There a number of site specific remedies that, as appropriate, need to be implemented and funded by Olin.

Please let me know your thoughts in this regard.

Thank you,

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